The Chronicle

of the Early American Industries Association, Inc.

Volume XIII | September, 1960 | Number 3

A RETURN TO COOPERSTOWN

THE Fall Meeting of the EAIA, October 14-16, will be held in Cooperstown, New York. Many of our members will recall the fine meeting held there in the fall of 1950 and will welcome a return visit.

In 1788, Judge William Cooper, father of James Fenimore Cooper, the novelist, and founder of Cooperstown erected at the foot of beautiful Otsego Lake a dwelling for his residence. It was here that his son James Fenimore Cooper made his permanent home. His novels, the famous Leatherstocking Tales, had their backgrounds in this and the surrounding area.

The Farmers' Museum, Entrance.

Today, Cooperstown houses the *National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum;* The *Fenimore House,* executive center of the New York State Historical Association, in which is located one of the greatest collections of the art of American craftsmen and amateurs. Shown, too, is the way of life of the now practically extinct New York Shakers; and the *Farmers' Museum.*

It is the Farmers' Museum that members of the EAIA will devote most of their visit. The Museum reflects the life of the ordinary people of yesterday who, in doing their daily work, built a great nation where before there had been only a forest. In this museum are gathered the utensils and implements they used. Their task is to interpret all phases of life in rural New York State as it was in the past.

Crossroads Village, Farmers' Museum.

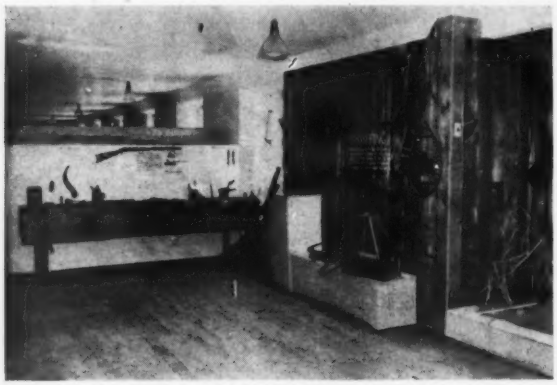
Many of the tools displayed are from the outstanding collection of William Buell Sprague, the first President and one of the founders of our Association. This collection is comprised of tools from the 18th and early 19th centuries, with a few items of the 17th century. The material was collected from Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania and the New England Area.

The entrance to the Farmers' Museum is through a huge stone barn, formerly an operating dairy. The first large room that one enters is called the *Woman's World.* Here are the implements of the early farm wife in her kitchen and in her dairy; candle, soap and cheese making,

butchering and meat preparation and laundering.

In the south wing of the *barn* the crafts and trades are exhibited. This exhibit has been completely re-arranged and members will be delighted with the ease and manner in which they are presented for study. They have been grouped as to their relationship, such as the tanner, shoemaker, and harness-maker; the woodsmen and lumberman, cabinetmakers, coopers, shinglemakers, etc. We feel this will be one of the highlights of our visit. Here are practically all the crafts that were used by the men who made pioneer and post-pioneer life possible.

The second floor contains flax preparation, spinning



Crafts exhibits.

and weaving and is no doubt one of the outstanding exhibits and demonstrations of this nature in the country.

Blacksmith's Shop, Village Crossroads.

The process by which the flax grown in the fields of the Farmers' Museum is made into cloth, may be seen step by step. The raw flax is processed and then spun and woven before the visitor's eyes.

On this floor is also housed a model circus consisting of nearly sixty wagons and the big top with its smaller units. Also may be seen the implements the farmer used in his fields; the early plows showing the various stages between the all-wooden and the all-metal plow, cultiva-

The Smith at his Forge.

tors and rollers; and the harvesting and threshing implements.

In the auditorium room on the first floor (west wing), on the second floor center, and in the sheds outside the main building are collections of vehicles of var-

Fenimore House.

ious types: an old ox-cart, the band wagon, the peddler's cart, road wagons and sleighs.

Outside the barn members will be afforded a visit to a recreated small crossroads settlement of a hundred or more years ago. A *Schoolhouse* (1810), moved from its original location, stands today exactly as it stood during a century and a half. To the *Country store* (1820), a typical crossroads country store from Toodsville, New

Spinning Wool.

York, came the early settlers to purchase those items not available on their farms — buttons, spices, patent medicines, teas, sugar, etc. In the small back rooms are a

Making butter in the Lippitt Farmhouse.

bonnet shop and post office. The *Blacksmith Shop*, built in New Berlin in 1827, where a blacksmith demonstrates his craft, using the early implements. The *Print Shop*, built in 1829 in Middlefield, New York, where we will see printing done on a Washington hand press as it was in bygone days. The *Doctor's Office* from Westford, New York, 1829. An office of country doctors for the better part of a century. A *Druggist shop*, c. 1832, built

Lippitt Farmhouse Kitchen. Early New York State pewter rack or "dresser" with utensils and china used by the housewife there.

in Harwick, New York. The *Lawyer's Office*, a typical country law office of the 1800-1850 period. The *Bump Tavern* from Windham, County, a typical tavern of the 19th century. The *Lippitt Homestead*. A farm house built about 1796 by Joseph Lippitt in Hinman Hollow and the first residence of this pioneer Otsego family after they had moved from Rhode Island. Here demonstrations of the early methods of making butter, baking, etc. are carried on.

During our visit we will be afforded the opportunity of viewing demonstrations of rope making, oat flailing and fanning or winnowing; horse shoeing; and tape loom weaving.

More detailed information will be forthcoming to our members as to the meeting and housing facilities in Cooperstown. Registration will be at the Fenimore House, just across the road from the Farmers' Museum. Hotel, motel, and tourist-home reservations will be handled by Mr. James Dodge, Innkeeper, Treadway Otesaga, Cooperstown, New York.

The New York State Historical Association has extended their welcome to the members of the Early

American Industries Association and have expressed their hope that our visit will be a pleasant and informative one.

Breaking Flax.

TENTATIVE PROGRAM

Friday - October 14th

9:00 A.M. - Noon	Registration, Fenimore House (All members of the EAIA attending this meeting will be given passes to the Cooperstown Museums.)
Noon	To be announced.
2:00 - 4:00 P.M.	Special behind-the scenes guided tour of Farmers' Museum.
5:00 P.M.	Hard and soft cider, courtesy of the New York State Historical Association, at Bump Tavern.
Evening	Dinner—The Treadway Otesage—To be followed by Whatsit session.

Saturday - October 15th

9:30 A.M.	Publication Committee meeting—place to be announced.
10:30 A.M.	Directors Meeting—place to be announced.
Noon	To be announced.
2:00 - 4:00 P.M.	Live demonstrations at The Farmers' Museum—Rope Making; Oat flailing and fanning or winnowing; Horse shoeing; and Tape loom weaving.
Evening	Dinner—The Treadway Otesaga—Mr. Frank Carpenter, speaker. Illustrated talk on Old Mills, Foundries of the area of 100 years or more ago.

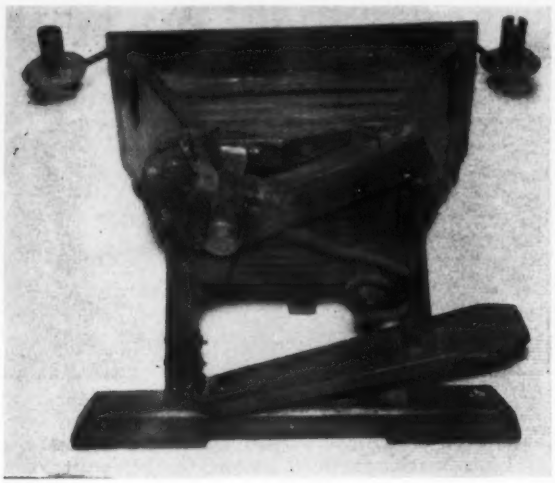
Sunday - October 16th

Individual visits to the Cooperstown Museums.

WHATSIT IDENTIFICATION

SPRING MEETING, SHELBURNE MUSEUM

MINER J. COOPER



THIS interesting machine was identified at the Shelburne meeting as a cork press used in the dark cellar of a winery. The candle holders indicate it was used in a dark place. The shape of the jaws accommodate a round object. The area of wear at the end of lever has a raised grain, indicating contact with perspiration, or other moisture from the hand. In operation, the machine would be placed on a table, the candles would be lighted, and a cork taken from the hopper would be compressed in the jaws of the clamp, and then be inserted in the bottle neck where it would expand, resulting in a tight seal. The bottom of the deep hopper is slatted. The upper slatted frame is removable, and of later construction. I believe this was added for the purpose of bringing the supply of corks to a more convenient working height.

Several of the members are satisfied that the above classification is correct. It certainly seems practical. However, if anyone believes, or knows, that it was for another purpose, please tell us about it. This was formerely in my collection but is now in the collection of James A. Keillor.

Early American Industries

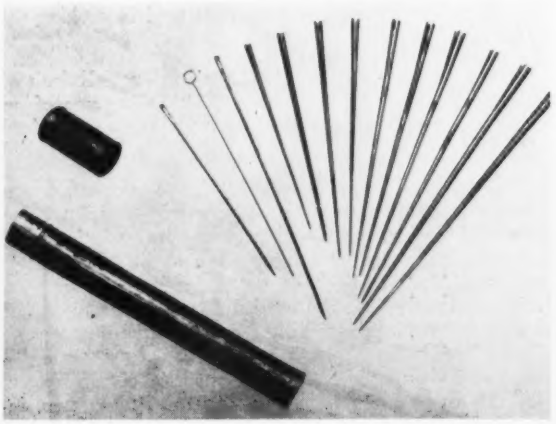
LARDING AND LARDING NEEELES

MARY EARLE GOULD

THE story of my gift of a set of larding needles is well worth telling.

I have my Grandmother Gould's cookbook of 1846 and after running across a rule about larding meat, I wrote to a distant friend to ask if he could tell me about the process and the tools. I had no reply. This was in 1952.

One Spring day in 1958, I went to the Wayside Country Store in Sudbury. As I stepped from my car, Milt Swanson, the owner, came to me and gave me a



Set of 10 larding needles, two poultry needles, one cake tester, and holder.

slender tin tubular holder. "This is yours," he said. It measures 11 inches long and an inch in diameter, with a two-inch long cover. I opened it cautiously. The steel tools within meant little to me, until I saw my letter of 1952 on yellow paper rolled tightly inside. The paragraph with my request about larding needles was marked. My friend had died and an auction of his entire collection followed. Milt Swanson attended the affair and purchased a lot of apparent junk. In it was the case of the larding needles. Finding my letter gave Mr. Swanson a thrill! It seemed as if the hand of Fate had turned the case to me.

To lard meat or fowl, strips called lardons or lardoons were inserted in the meat. These strips were bacon or fat pork. The cookbook said the strips were about 2 inches long and an inch wide and 8 of them were put into each pound of meat, with the larding needles.

The needle is a slender, pointed steel, rolled like a cornucopia, so that the tip is a sharp point and the head is slightly open. Each head has slits in it, an inch long, making 4 narrow parts. Into the slits, a piece of bacon or pork was set. As the needle was thrust into the meat and pulled through, the pieces of bacon slipped off and remained in the meat. With 8 pieces of bacon to each pound of meat, the meat was well seasoned. Today's term is basting, but on the outside, sometimes in gashes.

Another method still used across the water is to thread a long strip of bacon and pull it through and leave it. When the roast is cut, each slice has many dots of bacon in it.

The tin holder must have been a set that was purchased as complete. There are 10 needles of 5 different lengths, measuring from 9 inches in length to 6 inches, different lengths for different weights of meat. The set includes 2 long poultry needles, 9 and 7 inches, and a cake tester, a needle-like piece of steel with a loop handle.

Without doubt, the holder is between 75 and 100 years old. Reckoning by the early cookbooks 125 years ago, we can approximately date the needles as over 100 years old.

Flax Scutching Wheel

MINER J. COOPER

THE illustration is of an old time flax scutching wheel demonstrated at the Pennsylvania Dutch Folk Festival by Mr. James R. Johnson, Garret, Pennsylvania. This is a most interesting and ingenious machine which should be of interest to our members.

Mr. Johnson states that the beams are 6" x 6", and that it is a very heavy piece of equipment. However, it was a great time and labor saving device. One could scutch six times as much fibre as could be done by hand with a single scutching or swingling knife.

As the flax is held against the scutching board, directly in front of the operator, each knife scrapes downward across it as the wheel revolves, quickly and efficiently removing the husk and short fibres. The wheel is turned by means of a foot treadle hazily seen due to the shadows on the ground in front of it.

I would consider this machine a great rarity. Mr. Johnson wrote me about two years ago that he had heard of such a machine, and had been searching for one for years. It may be possible that some of our members have seen similar machines and will recognize their function. Whether such a machine is typically Pennsylvania would be difficult to say. If any of our members have seen or know of a machine of this type we would welcome a more detailed photograph and description for publication.

The Chronicle

OF SUMMER BEAMS AND SUNDRY

BY ROBERT G. HALL

THREE of us stood looking up at a long heavy beam encased and paneled, running the entire length of the room in which we stood. The room was the parlor of the Dwight-Barnard house built in Springfield, Massachusetts, as part of the restoration of old Deerfield village by the two people responsible for its preservation and restoration, Mr. and Mrs. Henry N. Flynt.

The three beam gazers were Mr. Flynt, Ed Durell, President of the Union Fork and Hoe Company of Columbus, Ohio, and former EAIA President and myself. Ed had directed our attention to the beam by remarking, "Well, there's the summer beam."

This strange name of *summer beam,* why it should be called by the name of a season of our year, piqued my curiosity. When I returned home I did a little research to see how the name arose. That was several years ago and I have had good intentions of sending in an article regarding this odd appelation, but like most people, my good intentions needed a little jab. That jab was supplied in the March 1960, issue of THE CHRONICLE, last page, by Ed Durrell. He asked for articles to help our editors. His plea has brought forth fruit. Here goes.

The word *summer,* as applied to the main load carrying beam of an old house, had its origin in France. The French people called a beast of burden, a *sommier.* Now inasmuch as a rafter in the French homes also carried a load, the beast of burden's name, *sommier* was transferred to designating a rafter, too.

The Frenchman called the driver of this pack horse a *sommetier.* As all of us know who studied our European history well, the French soldiers under William the Conqueror conquered the English in 1066 at the Battle of Hastings. From that time on the English in their association with the ruling French, adopted many of the French words to English usage. The English set them down in the spelling that would approximate in English what the words sounded like in French. The word *sommetier,* meaning the driver of a beast of burden, was somehow confused by the English to mean the horse itself and so the English spelled this word for the pack horse, *sumpter.* You can find the word in the English dictionary today, having all three meanings, either the driver of the horse, the animal itself, or the load it carried! From this you can see how easily it was to associate the name of the load-carrying pack horse, *sumpter* with the load-carrying main beam of a house. Somewhere along the line of time the letter p and t were dropped off and the name was corrupted to *summer* beam.

So when next you look at the main carrying beam of an old house, your mind can travel away back to ancient France and visualize the pack horse plodding along with his driver who is dressed in the garb of those ancient days, and say a little prayer for both man and beast whose names gave us the pleasant term, *summer beam.*

Let's proceed from the derivation of the name of the aforementioned rafter to the reason for calling some of the things we use in and about our homes by the names that we do.

It is a common occurrence in all languages for the name of an implement used in a process or endeavor to be given to the process itself, or for the name of the place where the process is carried on to be given to the thing being done. As an example, the Roman people used the word, *coquere* to designate the act of cooking. This word, meaning *to cook,* got into the French language as *cuisine.* The Anglo-Saxons adopted this word, too, but it came out *cycene.* When the English adopted it for their use, it finally ended up as *kitchen,* meaning not *to cook,* but the room where the cooking was done. That is why the old utensils we collect that were used in cooking are called, *kitchen utensils.*

The word used to describe the luscious fall fruit of our vineyards offers us the example of the name of an implement used in harvesting being given to the food harvested.

Originally the word for the grape was a German name composed of two German words, *win,* meaning vine, and *berige,* meaning berry, or *berry of the wine,* and combined into the one word, *winberige.* However, as I mentioned earlier, the Battle of Hastings in 1066 had a great effect on the English language because after this date the English instead of resenting the incursion of French words into their language, welcomed them because they thought they sounded much fancier. Therein lies the reason for calling our vineyard fruit grapes, instead of wineberiges. The iron hook that was used to harvest the grapes was called a *grappin* by the French. In time the fruit itself took on the name of the harvesting implement and was called a grappe and finally one p was dropped and it became grape.

The cabinetmaker and the cabinet he made derive their name in a curious way.

In Rome the late Latin word for cabin was, *capanna.* The Italians used it in a diminutive form as *gabinetto,* meaning a little cabin. The term eventually came to mean a private room for consultation, especially for affairs of state. Eventually, the group of men who met to discuss these affairs of state and to advise on them took on the name of the room where these discussions met. Ergo, this group came to be known as *the cabinet.* However, the word came to be applied to any small, private space, and inasmuch as a piece of furniture that had small closed spaces and secret compartments, as the cabinet meeting rooms, it was natural to call this piece of furniture a cabinet, too. And so the man who did this fine furniture making came to be known as a cabinetmaker.

The dictionary is replete with the derivation of the names of things with which the members of EAIA are concerned. I suggest to these members so inclined to make a hobby of looking up names such as I have discussed, and sending in the results to our editors. The articles would be of interest to our members, a help to our editors and a contribution to our education.

A compilation of these articles would make a worthwhile addition to EAIA's library.

Early American Industries

Four Bulls-Eye Lense Lamp and a Whatsit

Howard W. Stone

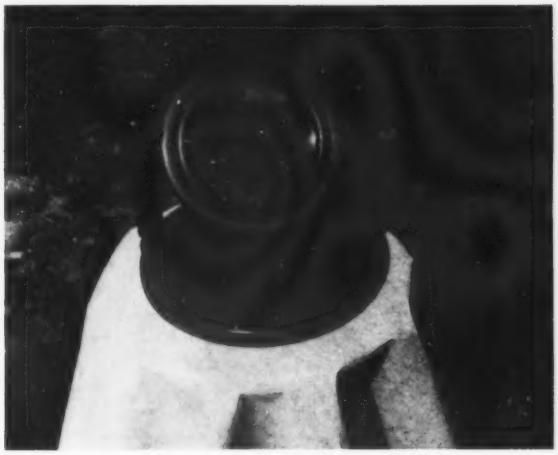
THIS lamp, by family tradition is a tailor's lamp and was used in a New Hampshire tailor shop many years ago. It has been handed down from one generation to another and is approximately 150 years old. I was able to purchase it from this family who was very happy to see it go into a collection of early lighting devices.

The base is 4 inches in diameter and is of heavy iron painted black. The rest of the lamp is of tin and painted brown with light grey striping. It has the original paint and striping which is still in very good condition.

The height of the lamp is 8 inches and has four lenses each with a viser, one lense being removable to permit the removal of the 10 sided *blown in the mold* glass oil font which has a pewter burner with two vertical tin wick tubes. The glass lenses are ¾ inches thick at the center, and three inches in diameter. One can see in the center of the four lenses the double wick sticking up.

The lamp when in use would sit in the middle of the tailor's work table and throw a light to the four sides where the workers would sit. I have lighted this lamp many times to show my friends, and at night it is amazing the amount of light it throws out. Sitting in a dark room with the lamp going and with the light beams showing in four different directions is quite a thrill.

I recently purchased the above interesting item but

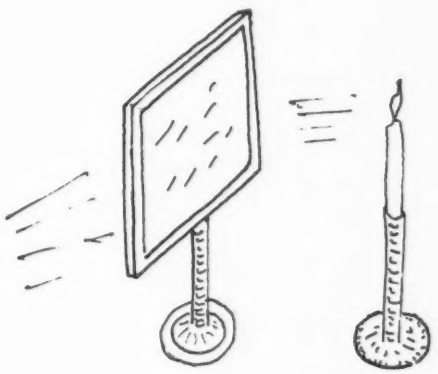


Craftsman's Window? Magnifying glass?

have little idea as to what purpose it was used. You will note on the right side of the picture a bright spot on the ground made by the sun shining through the glass.

The frame and glass measures six inches in diameter and the magnifying glass is a quarter of an inch thick at the center. The base is twelve inches in diameter.

This, I suppose, could have been used as a craftsman's *window* by placing a candle behind it to concentrate the light through and onto the object he is working on. I have set up a candle beside it and found that it worked very well. It could also be used as a magnifying glass by tilting the glass and placing the object on the round base. I don't believe it is very old but do find it interesting. Can any of you members identify it for me?



Shoemaker's Window.

Editors' note: Mr. Stone sent us his *Window* in response to our query to him concerning a Shoemaker's

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The Chronicle

The Sixth Sense of The Craftsman

Ralph Hodkinson

SEVERAL instances of the seemingly supernatural powers of the craftsman have already been discussed. Let us examine just a few more to show that these powers exist in almost any field.

The pewterer, for example, often had only old or damaged pewter for his raw material. This he would sort into grades using only a small long tool with a tiny cup hollowed out between the edges of its triangular pointed end. He heated this end sufficiently so that when thrust into the old pewter it would cause a single drop to melt into the little cup. Judging only by the way the drop formed and by its appearance in the cup, he would classify the piece as fine, good, ley, or black pewter, thus establishing with some accuracy the relative amounts of tin, copper, antimony, and lead in each piece.

He used this sorted pewter for making new pieces, some of which might well have involved a hollow handle. Here he used that almost impossible technique known as "slush molding." The mold was a simple two-piece one, its cavity shaped to form the outside of the handle. He held it in one hand while he poured the molten pewter directly into the open end of the cavity.

Now, metals cool and solidify from the outside in. Those who have watched carefully the casting of a pewter spoon have glimpsed that rapid change of the exposed surface from brightness to dullness which indicates that solidification of the whole spoon has occurred.

The whole solidification of the filled handle mold would take only a relatively few seconds. At some fleeting instance during this short time, the outer shell of the cooling pewter would congeal to the right thickness desired for the handle and the right consistency to stay put. At this instant also, the central core of the soon-to-be handle would be still liquid enough to flow.

At precisely that split second when all these unseen conditions were met, the pewterer's hand made the quick, deft flick which would drive the semi-liquid core out of the mold, leaving within only the fully congealed shell which would be the hollow handle. No possible combination of his ordinary physical senses (in fact not even an electric stop watch) could have told him exactly when this moment of magic came, yet he knew!

Equally valid examples, although less dramatic, are the feats of the early American potters. Native clay, although variable in its quality, can be quickly judged as to its workability. Not so with the glazes, which must "fit" the clay, that is to say act compatibly with the clay during shrinking and firing. That completely unblemished shiny surface comes only when near-perfect glaze formulae, materials, glaze application techniques, and firing conditions are used. Glaze application looks simple. For pots like those used by our early forefathers, it consists of pouring, for inner surfaces, and dipping for outer ones. But here again, time (during which the glaze actually soaks into the porous clay) is a critical factor. Too long or too short a period of contact with the clay, and the glaze runs, does not cover, crazes, or blisters in the firing. Unmeasured, and perhaps unmeasurable, the correct timing for each glaze was nevertheless "sensed" by the well attuned artist in clay.

Any degree of success in firing these pots was also direct evidence of special powers. Carefully placed in out-of-door kilns heated by hand-stoked wood fires, they were at the mercy of the winds and the operator's skill for the many hours it took to achieve the 1800 to 2000 degree temperature. Whether they over-fired or under-fired during this time depended upon the operator's ability to sense each new situation as it occurred, and do the right thing at the correct time in the best possible way.

Even the seemingly routine process of cultivating, gathering, and preparing the family's store of herbs for the winter involved special talents not learned from books or other sources of knowledge. There is a right time and condition for the cutting, digging, or picking of each for best results. This time can not be indicated by calendars or clocks, but must be felt by the individual through some special instincts. Especially is this true in the case of those roots, barks, and wild herbs which must be sought out in the woods and swamps, and therefore cannot be readily checked every day as those in the garden can.

That the truly outstanding craftsman in any craft or any period is gifted with powers above and beyond those of his normal senses seems to be a little-appreciated but unquestionable fact. Having expounded it at some length, three valid observations worthy of thought should be made.

1. Consideration of this *"sixth sense"* may lead some to feel that the superior craftsman must have been some kind of superman. This is hardly true. These individuals were different only insofar as they were especially sensitive to the demands of their medium and sufficiently intelligent and persistent to "learn" those things which cannot be "taught." An interesting example of this lies in the old belief that the fencing master always kept one "trick" which he did not teach his pupil, lest some day they should fight against him in earnest. The fallacy here is that the pupil could readily learn this one "trick" from observation of some other expert swordsman in mortal combat, or through his own ingenuity and resourcefulness. More probably, the fencing master did not teach this one "trick" because it simply could not *be* taught. It was his "sixth sense"!

2. It is quite possible that the "sixth sense" cannot be taught simply because we do not know how to teach it. Furthermore, it is probably not an inherited talent, and if it were, it would not be given to the individual in full bloom. Rather, it can be acquired, at least by some people, and must be cultivated through diligent study and practice of the craft and its medium. It can be developed to unlimited extent by the efforts of the individual himself, but flourishes best in an atmosphere of combined humility and confidence. Its growth is arrested only at the point where the craftsman first believes that he really knows all there is to know about his craft.

(Continued on page 40)

The Chronicle

Early American
Industries Association, Inc.

The purpose of the association is to encourage the study and better understanding of early American industry, in the home, in the shop, on the farm, and on the sea, and especially to discover, identify, classify, preserve and exhibit obsolete tools, implements, utensils, instruments, vehicles, appliances and mechanical devices used by American craftsmen, farmers, housewives, mariners, professional men, and other workers.

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Little Falls, New York

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Communications regarding the contents of *The Chronicle* and back issues should be addressed to the Editors; suggestions for members to John P. Fox; all other matters to the President. Address as here given.

DUES

The annual dues are payable on January 1st and are $6.00. The *Chronicle* is published quarterly and is sent to all members without additional charge. Printed on the press of The *Virginia Gazette,* founded 1736, *Williamsburg, Virginia.*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

THE EAIA has continued to grow in membership since it was founded in 1933. This growth has continued to increase the responsibilities of our Treasurer who for the past eighteen years has unselflessly devoted her time to carry the financial obligations of our Association. A task by far more important than any other office of the EAIA and without which we could not exist! We are happy to announce that the Board of Directors have appointed Mrs. Anne P. Jones to be Assistant Treasurer to Mrs. Josephine Peirce. Thank you, Josephine, for your continued devotion to the EAIA.

The Board of Directors have appointed Mr. Louis H. Brendel, Bridgeport, Connecticut, to be our Secretary. "Lou" has been a Director and an enthusiastic member of our Association for a number of years. We feel he will be an asset to the Association.

FRED C. SABIN.

THE PLOW

IN volume XIII, number one, March, 1960, the Chronicle contained an excellent article by David Briggs Maxfield on the Plow. All of the illustrations in this article were architectural line drawings. In this article there were fourteen such illustrations.

Mr. Maxfield has now turned over to the Editors fourteen beautifully executed drawings of the same line drawings which appeared in March, 1960 issue.

In the December issue of the Chronicle the Editors propose to reproduce these drawings on a slip sheet so that they may be attached to the original article.

THE CHRONICLE

POST OFFICE BOX 308
WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA

To expedite and safeguard delivery of correspondence from our members to the Editors of the Chronicle, we have secured a Post Office Box number at Williamsburg. We urge our members to make note of this change.

CORRECTIONS

THE Editors in the last issue published a notice of the organization of the Carriage Collectors Association. The press release we received listed Mrs. J. Watson Webb as Vice President pro tem. We have been notified by Mrs. Webb that she did not accept the vice-presidency of this association, nor is the Shelburne Museum a member of this group. We are indeed sorry for this mistake.

The article in the last issue on the Whetstone wooden holster stated the length of the holster as being 17 inches, this should have been 7 inches.

The Chronicle

MEMBER'S COMMENTS

In June, 1960, Number Two, Chronicle

FROM MARY EARLE GOULD

A Holder for a Whetstone, page 22. Webster: a holster is made of leather used for pistols. In my museum it is a wooden holder, see illustration, for a whetstone. It measures 10½ inches long, 2½ inches wide, with a 6½ inch cavity, leaving a ⅜ inch thick side. The cavity was cut with a tool like all wooden receptacles and it has a flat floor. The holder tapers to a point and was painted green originally, to preserve the wood. Two holes were bored near the upper edge, through which a small coarse cord was fastened and tied. Into this is tied two larger cords long enough to go around a man's waist. The holder was filled with water and it carried the whetstone. When the worker arrived at the field, the holder was stuck into the ground, until needed. This whetstone belonged to my family.

Information Wanted, page 22. "Three wax candle engines." Webster says that the word *engine* means anything used to affect a purpose, any devise or contrivance. Could it mean *holders* for the candles?

Whatsit's, page 25. Mr. Keith's item number 4. In my *Early American House* there is a picture of two soft soap scoops, one measuring 13 by 5, overall, and the other 8½ by 4. Soft soap scoops are bleached from the lye of the soap, showing a decided whiteness and often cracked from the action of the lye. Such a large scoop signified a large family or Tavern as owners.

FROM NEWTON C. BRAINARD

Ox Bow Shaper, page 20. My experience in making miniature Windsor chairs has taught me that the bow should be fastened at the center and then bent alternately down the two sides. Bending should be done before finishing to avoid having splinters break out.

Nail-Maker's anvil, page 17. Is not the design of the nailmaker's anvils governed by the type of nail? Figure 2, was probably used by a maker of pointed horseshoe nails, which are still driven into the post. It would not be feasible to drive a hot nail from the bottom after heading in order to release it from a tapered hole. The point would be blunted. On an anvil of this type the pointed nail could be shaped and the head formed in a "bore", as mentioned on page 26. A blunt, or carpenter's nail would be headed in a tapered hole and freed by tapping from underneath, which has been illustrated several times. It was done by a rod connected with a foot lever. (Editors' note: We are searching as to whether the heated nail was driven out of the bore by stricking on the point or, if not, how it was performed. We hope to have in the near future additional information on this.)

FROM ELWOOD J. WAY

Mr. Bowcock's *wax candle engines,* page 22. Resorting to a current dictionary, Webster's New Collegiate, 1956, throws some light on this problem, particularly the first or archaic definition. "Engine (dialect, humorous) Old French engin, skill, machine, engine, from Latin ingenium, natural capacity, invention. French in, in, plus the root of gignere, to produce. Definitions: 1. Archaic, anything used to effect a purpose any agent, means or method. 2. Any mechanical tool; also machinery; especially an instrument or machine of war or torture. 3. Any machine by which physical force is applied to produce a physical effect, as one for converting heat into a more directly usable form as torque on a crank-shaft. 4. Specifically a railroad locomotive.

The Encyclopedia Britannica, ninth edition, 1911, contains similar statements, and in addition states that in the 19th century the word came to have, when employed alone, a specific reference to the steam engine, but was also used for air, gas, and oil engines. The word engine is still used in this archaic sense in England, I believe, but I cannot cite specific examples.

The following references indicate that the word was used in its archaic sense well into the 19th century: In a book review written by a son of Eli Terry, (Waterbury American, Friday, June 10th, 1853. Quoted verbatim in American Clocks and Clockmakers, Drepperd 1958, 2nd edition, pp 86, 88.), the famous Connecticut clock-maker, speaking of his father, "He made clocks of wood and brass in the then ordinary way, having a hand *engine* for

cutting the teeth or cogs." He also spoke of a machine patented in 1813 or 1814 for cutting cogs, having three mandrels. "This was superseded . . . by the construction of an *engine* by Mr. Terry, with only one mandrel."

A System of Natural Philosophy in which are explained the Principles of Mechanics, by J. L. Comstock, M.D. of Hartford Connecticut, 1860, states: "The air pump is an engine by which air can be pumped out of a vessel or withdrawn from it."

It seems probable that search in publications of the 18th and early 19th centuries would disclose many similar examples of the use of the word Engine in this now archaic sense. It is believed, however, that the examples cited reasonably support the conclusion that Mr. Bowcock's *three wax candle engines* were mere dipping wheels or some other device used in making candles, slightly more complex than candle moulds, and were by no means devices which would be described as engines as of now.

FROM J. DIDSBURY

A Holder for a Whetstone, page 22. The 1934 tool catalogue of the Marugg Company, Tracy City, Tennessee, illustrates on page 7, a "Whetstone Sheath, #44." and describes it as follows: "Whetstone Sheath (Wetzsteinbecher), galvanized iron, waterproof, has anti-rattler, to prevent whetstone from rattling while mowing. Has hook for fastening to belt. Natural stones should be kept immersed in water, while in use so as to keep the pores open and sharp. Weight ½ lb. Length 6 inches. Price 35 cents."

Shoemakers Window

(Continued from page 35)

Window. Several years ago a visitor to Colonial Williamsburg, who was born and raised in Germany but now a citizen of United States, drew for us a *Shoemaker's Window*, as he called it. He had seen these used in shoemaker's shops in Germany when he was a child. He described it as a pane of glass in a frame, as a window frame appears. The candle was placed on one side, as the illustration shows, and the work on the other. We assume that there may have been some magnification of light thrown on the work on the opposite side of the window. We are trying to locate one similar to this for our Shoemaker's Tool Catalogue. Have any of our members ever seen one or know where one is located? Please let us know.

Whatsit Report

PUBLICATION OF WHATSIT PHOTOGRAPHS

MINER J. COOPER

IN order that our Whatsit Program may be developed to produce maximum results and that the Chronicle may be of greater service toward the identification of Whatsits, we request that all correspondence and photographs concerning Whatsits be sent directly to the Whatsit Chairman.

He will screen all items, and send only those he feels are still to be identified for publication in the Chronicle. Photographs and sketches of readily identified Whatsits will be returned to the owner with details as to name and use, and any other important information.

The handling of photographs and information will be greatly expedited if owners will use the following procedure:

1. Photographs:

   These should give a good, clear definition of the object. Additional angle views, or closeups should be taken in order to present a complete picture of the object.

   For publication we prefer a professional 8" x 10" glossy print. (5" x 7" will be accepted if necessary).

   Members who do not feel that the cost of a professional photograph is warranted should send the best photograph possible. In the event a professional photograph is needed for publication purposes, the owner will be notified, and and the Association will be willing to pay up to $5.00 for each photograph.

2. Sketches:

   Sketches to illustrate important details will be helpful, or to show the complete object will be acceptable. However, if used for publication purposes they will have to be of a professional type, that will not have to be re-drawn.

3. Information:

   A. Where obtained. (This is often a clue toward identification).

   B. Measurements: Diameter — length, width, height or depth or thickness. Any other measurements pertinent to identification.

   C. Type of material — wood, iron, tin, etc.

   D. Wear or use marks, and location. (This is important.)

   E. How do you think it was used manually?

   F. What do you, or others, think it was used for? Please give all the information you have uncovered, no matter how improbable it may seem to you.

   G. Any other information which may be of possible help in the identification.

The Whatsit Chairman will be grateful for complete information, and the best photographs and sketches pos-

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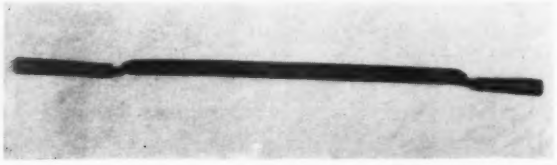
DOUBLE HANDLED RASP

ROBERT MITCHELL

THIS rasp was found in East Pepperell, Massachusetts, and the use is unknown. It has been suggested that it might have been used for "tapering the end of a log."

Dimensions are 48" overall, 25" actual length of the rasp face between the offset handles. Rasp is 1½" wide and ½" thick.

Mr. Edward Durell believes this rasp was used on a soft material rather than a hard material. He bases his opinion on the fact that the rasp teeth are nearly at right angle to the length of the rasp. If it were going to be



used to smooth hard material the rasp would have been at about 45° rather than at the present at about 10°. He suggests that this rasp might have been used in smoothing the mortise and tenons of large framing timbers to get it tight fit.

What do you members think?

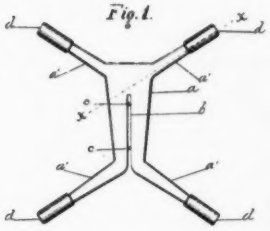
Sixth Sense of The Craftsman

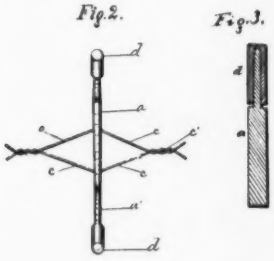
(Continued from page 36)

3. As members of an organization dedicated to the study of tools and their uses, we should try to understand and appreciate this "sixth sense" and the fact that it can be cultivated. We should learn to recognize it in the craftsmen we contact and do whatever we can to encourage its development. For the tool itself is of little value unless it is guided and directed by the hands and heart of its true master.

SAW WREST

ELWOOD J. WAY





THE above illustration was patented by Lucian A. Cussins and John M. Overpeck, of New Paris, Ohio. Patent number 338,659, March 23, 1886. They call their patent a *Wrench for Twisting Wire*. I have heard some call it a *Saw Wrest*. The specification state: "In twisting two wires together they are at equal distances from the center of the wrench and from the center of motion ,and as successive twists are made the wires slide in the slot toward each other until the twist is perfected, when the wrench is removed." You will note that the drawing is not accurate since it shows that rotating the device with top handle coming toward you, would unwind the twist at the right, which is at variance with the text.

Figure one shows the device; figure two, a side view showing the wire twisted. The specification states: "When two parallel wires are stretched, preparatory to placing pickets between them to be made into a fence, the wrench is held in a position to make the slot *b* horizontal when it is passed over the wires *c c*, and the operator, by means of the handles *d d*, turns the wrench sidewise toward him, producing the twist *c'*, as shown in Fig. 2." Figure three is a sectional view of one of the handles.

Whatsit Report

(Continued from page 39)

sible. It will save everyone time and effort. If, during the process of identification, or at some time in the future, the owner discovers the name and use of his Whatsit, he should notify the Whatsit Chairman, so that our Whatsit files may be kept up to date.

The owner will be given full credit for any Whatsit items published in the Chronicle.